

Application No. 10/626,039
Amendment dated September 16, 2004
Reply to Office Action of June 16, 2004

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Non-Final Office Action dated June 16, 2004. By way of this amendment, claim 13 has been canceled, and claims 12, 14 and 17 has been amended. Claims 12 and 14-20 are currently pending in the application. Applicant believes that the amendments place the application in condition for allowance.

Claims 12 and 16-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 3,213,909 (Kivimaa).

Independent claim 12 has been amended to include all of the limitations previously recited in claim 13. Specifically, claim 1 now recites that step (d) includes 1) determining the reciprocation position of the blades; and 2) moving a linear offset motion assembly which is connected to the blades linearly in timed relationship with the reciprocation of the blades. The Examiner has indicated that this is an allowable combination.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to include limitations substantially similar to those in claim 13, which the Examiner has indicated as containing allowable subject matter. In particular, claim 17 recites that steps (c) and (d), i.e. the alternate upstream and downstream blade motions, which coincide with the corresponding cutting and non-cutting blade motions, are made using an offset linear motion assembly. It is submitted that claim 17 as amended is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited prior art.

Each of claims 14-16 and 18-20 depends from amended claims 12 or 17, and are

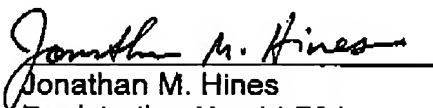
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thus believed to be allowable for the reasons stated above.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 13-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, in light of the above arguments that claim 12 is allowable, the rewriting of claims 13-15 is not felt to be necessary.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the objections and rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 12 and 14-20 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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